

**H**ere becometh the Medled lyfe  
 Compyled by mayster Water Hylton, to a  
 deuoute man in temperall estate howe  
 he shulde rule hym / Whiche is right ex-  
 pedient for euery man / and moſte in  
 eſpeyall for them that lyue in the  
 Medled lyfe / And it ſhe Wyth  
 What Medled lyfe is. . . .



## **T**abula.

**T**here begynneth the table  
of this present booke.

**H**ow Be a man that Wyll be ghostly / must  
fyrste vse moche bodely exerceyse in penaunce  
and destroyinge of synne. The first Chaptre.

**H**ow Be a man that is sett oonly to ghostly  
lyuyng shall rule all his dedys by discrecion  
Without Which they tourne often in to vyce.  
The seconde. Chaptre.

**W**nto What maner man belongeth actyfe  
lyfe. The thirde. Chaptre.

**W**nto Whom belongeth cōtemplatyfe lyfe  
The fourthe. Chaptre.

**W**nto Whom belongeth medled lyfe. The  
fyfthe. Chaptre.

**H**ow Be holy Bysshops Vsed medled lyfe /  
e that a man that hath Souerentye shal nat  
gyue hym only to deuocion: and vtterly leue  
Woildly besynes. The. vi. Chaptre.

**W**hat lyfe mooste accorded to hym that this  
Was Wryten to. The. vii. Chaptre.

**H**ow Be a man that is Well traueyled / and  
preuyd i dedys of actyfe lyfe / may passe forth  
and attayne to Contemplacion / Which is fy  
gured by Iacobes Wyues Rachell / and Lea  
The. viii. Chaptre.

## **T**ribula.

**T**hat a man shall somtyme haue the more deuocion / Whan he hath be letted by our Bar de Werkes. The. xv. Chapter.

**W**hat is desyre to god for hym selfe. The. tenth. Chapter.

**T**hat in clemmes of conscience / is the Very comforte & Betnes. The. vi. Chapter.

**H**ow Be thou shalt dispose the to deuocyon. The. vii. Chapter.

**H**ow Be a man shall haue mynde on cristes manhod / & of his passion. The. viii. Chapter.

**H**ow Be a man shall thynke on Vertues and on scyntes. The. ix. Chapter.

**O**f our Lady & of our Lorde Ihesu / How ye shall beholde theyr holynes. The. x. Chapter.

**O**f beholding of the myght / the Wysdom the goodnes and the mercy of god to his creatures. The. xi. Chapter.

**H**ow Be the mynde of the Wretchydnes and of perylles of this Worlde maketh a soule to desyre heuen. The. xii. Chapter.

**H**ow Be a man shall do / When he feleth no sauoure / nor comforte in his medytacions. The. xiii. Chapter.

**W**herfore a man nedeth / to be Ware in medytacion. The. xiiii. Chapter.

**H**ere endeth the table.

Cho We a man that Wyll be ghoſtly muſte  
firſte Uſe moche Bodely exercyſe in pe-  
nauice / and diſtroyinge of synne.  
The firſte.                      L haptre.



God brother in criſte / Wo-  
maner of ſtates there are in  
holy L hurch / by the Whi-  
che criſten ſoules do pleaſe  
god / & get theym the blyſſe  
of Heuen: The one is bode-  
ly / and the other is ghoſtly / Bodely Werkyng  
ge logeth principally to Worldly men & Wo-  
men / the Which fully Uſe Worldly goodes  
and Wyllfully Uſe Worldly beſynes. Alſo it  
longeth to all yonge begynnynge men / The  
Which come ne We out of Worldly ſynnes  
to the ſeruyce of god: for to make them able to  
ghoſtly Werkyng / & for to breke doWne the  
Inbumpnes of the body by diſcretion / and  
by ſuche bodely Werkyng that it myght be  
ſomple & redy / and nat moche contraryous to  
the ſpyrite in ghoſtly Werkyng / For ſeynt  
Paule ſaith as Woman Was made for man  
and nat man for Woman / Right ſo bodely  
Werkyng Was made for ghoſtly / and nat  
ghoſtly for bodely / bodely Werkyng gothe  
before / & ghoſtly cometh after as ſeynt Pau-



le sayth. ¶ Mon q̄ prius spirituale: sed q̄ prius  
us animale deinde spirituale. And this is a  
cause Why it behouyeth to be so / for We are bor  
ne in synne and corrupcion of the flesshe / by  
the Whiche We are so blyndyd & so ouerleyde  
that We haue neyther the ghostly knowlege  
of god by lyght of Vnderstadyng / nor ghost  
ly felynge of hym / by clene desyre of louynge  
and therefore We may nat sodenly sterte out  
of this derke nyght of this flesshe ly corrupci  
on in to the ghostly lyght / For We may nat  
suffre it / nor bere it for syckenes of our selfe /  
no more than We may With our bodely yen  
Whan they are sore beholde the l. ghte of the  
sonne / Therefore We muste abyde and Wer  
ke by proccesse of tyme. Firste by bodely Wer  
kes besyly tyll We be discharged of this heuy  
burden of synne / Whiche lettyth vs fro ghost  
ly Werkyng / & tyll our soules be somwhat  
clensyd from great outwarde synes & abled  
to ghostly Werke. By this bodely Werkyng  
that I speake of mayste thou Vnderstande al  
maner of good Werke that thy soule dothe by  
the Wyttes & membris of thy body Vnto thy  
selfe / as in fastyng / Wakynge / & in restray  
nyng of flesshe ly lust / by penauce doyng  
or to thyne euen crysten / by fulfyllynge of the  
dedes of mercy bodely or ghostly or Vnto god

by suffrynge of all bodely myscheues for the  
loue of right Wysesnes. All thysse Werkes don  
in trouthe by charyte pleaseth god / Without  
Whiche they are nought. Than Who so desyr  
eth for to be occupyed ghostly: it is sykter and  
propytable to hym / that he be first Wel assay  
de a longe tyme in this bodely Werkyng / for  
thysse bodely dedes are a token & a she Wyng  
of morall Vertues / Without Whiche a soule  
is nat able for to Werke ghostly. Breke do  
ne firste pryde in bodely veryng / & also With  
in thy herte thynkyng / bostryng / & praysyng  
of thy selfe / Dayne lykynge in thy self of any  
thig that god hath sent to the bodely or ghost  
ly. Breke do Wne also Enuy & yre agaynste  
thynne euen cristen / Whether they be ryche or  
poore / good or badde that thou hate hym nat:  
nor haue dysdeyne of hym Wyfuly / neyther  
in Worde nor in dede. Also breke do Wne Co  
uetyse of Worldly good / that thou for y<sup>t</sup> hol  
dyng / gettyng / or sauynge of it offende nat  
thy consyence / ne breke nat charyte to god &  
to thyn euen cristen / for loue of any Worldly  
good / but that thou gettyst to kepe it / & spen  
de it Without loue and Dayne lykynge of it /  
as reason asketh in Worshyp of god / and hel  
pe of thyn euen cristen. Breke do Wne also as  
moche as thou mayst flesshely lykynge eyther

of acerybye/or bodely ease/glotony/or lechery  
And than Whan thou hast ben Well trauey  
fed/and Well assayde in al suche bodely Wer  
kes / than mayste thou by grace o:dayne the  
to ghoftly Werkynge.

**T**HoWe a man that is set only to ghostly ly  
uyngē / shall rule all his dedes by discrecion /  
Without Whiche they turne often in to vyce.  
The seconde. Chaptre.

**T**he grace and the goodnes of  
our loude Ihesu criste/that he  
hathe shewed to the in With/  
dra Wyng of thyn herte fro  
luste/and lykyng of World  
ly Vanyte:and Use of fleshe  
ly synnes: And in turnyng of thy Wyll en/  
tyerly to his seruyce/ & his plesance byngeth  
in to my herte moch inate to loue hym in his  
mercy.& also it steryth me greatly to strength  
the in thy good purpose/and in thy Werkyn/  
ge that thou haste begon for to bynge it to a  
good ende if that I coulde. And principally  
for god/ and sythen for tender affection of lo  
ue that thou hast to me/ if it be a Wretche and  
Vnworthy/ I knowe Well the desyre of thy  
herte that thou desyrest greatly/ to serue our

Forde by ghostly occupacion all holly With/  
out lettynge or troublynge of Worldly besy/  
nes/that thou myghtest come by grace to mo  
re knowlege and ghostly felynge of god & of  
ghostly thyngs/this desyre is good as I hope  
and of god for it is set vpon hym in charyte  
spiritually / Neuerthelesse it is to refrayne &  
rule by discrecion as agaynst outward Wer  
kyngge after the state that thou arte in/for cha  
ryte vntuled tourneth somtyme in to vyce/  
and therfore it is sayd in holy Writ. ¶ **O**rdi/  
nauit in me charitatem/ That is to saye our  
Forde gruyngge to me charyte/set it in ordie &  
in rule that it shulde nat be losse thorough my  
vndiscreffion/ right so this charyte/and this  
desyre that our Forde hath gyuen of his mer/  
cy to the/is for to rule and ordeyne how thou  
shalt pursue it after thy degre askyth/and af/  
ter the lyuyngge that thou hast vsed before ty/  
me/ and after the grace of vertues that thou  
now hast/ Thou shalt nat vtterly forgo  
thy desyre for to leue occupacion and besynes  
of the Worlde/the Whiche are nedeful to vse  
in reuolynge of thy selfe/and of all other that  
are vnder thy keepynge/and gyue the holly to  
ghostly occupacion of Prayers/and holy me  
dytacions/as it Were a frere or a Monke:or  
an other man / that Were nat bounde to the

Worde be Children and seruauntes as thou  
arte for it falleth nat to the / and if thou do so  
thou kepest nat the ordre of charyte. ¶ Also if  
thou Woldest leue Vtterly ghostly occupaci/  
on namely no Be after the grace yt god hath  
gyuen to the / and set the holly to the besynes  
of the Worlde / in fulfyllynge of the Werkes  
of actyfe lyfe / as fully as any other man that  
neuer feled deuocion / thou leuyst the ordre of  
charyte . For thy state asketh for to do bothe /  
eche of them i dyuerse tymes thou shalt medle  
the Werkes of actyfe lyfe With ghostly Wer/  
kes of lyfe contemplatyfe . And than deest  
thou Well / for thou shalt one tyme be besye  
With Martha for to rule / & gouerne thy hous/  
holde . Thy children / thy seruaunt / thy neygh/  
bours / thy tenauntes / if they do Wel cōforte  
them therin and helpe them / If they do cūll  
for to teche them / amende them / and chastyse  
them / and thou shalt also lōke & knowe Wy/  
sely thy thinges / and thy Worldey goodes be  
rightfully kepte by thy seruaunt / gouernyd  
and truly spendyd that thou myght the mo/  
re plētously fulfyl the dedes of mercy With  
them Vnto thy euen christen . Also thou shalt  
With marie leue the besynes of the Worlde / &  
spytte do Wne at the feet of our Lorde by meke/  
nes in prayers and in holy thoughtes / and in  
Med.lyfe. B.

contemplacion of hym as he gyueth the grace  
a so shalt thou go from that one to that other  
medefully and fulfyl them bothe: And than  
kepest thou Well the ordie of charyte.

¶ Vnto What maner of man belongeth  
actyfe lyfe. The thirde.      L haptre.

**N**euerthelesse that thou ne ha/  
ue Bondie of this that I say:  
therefore I shal tell the and de/  
clare to the a lytell of this mo  
re openly. Thou shalt Vnder  
stande that there is thre maners of Lyuynge:  
The firste is Actyfe lyfe: The seconde is con  
templatyfe lyfe: The thirde is made of bothe  
and that is Medled lyfe / Actyfe lyfe aboue  
longeth to Worldly men a Women / the Whi  
che ar lewde in knowyng of ghostly occupa  
cion / for they ne fele sauour ne deuociō by fer  
uour of loue as other men do / nor they can no  
skyll of it: yet neuerthelesse they haue dreed of  
god a of the payne of helle: And therefore they  
flee synne / and they haue desyre for to please  
god a for to come to heuen / and a good Wyll  
haue to theyr euen cristen / Vnto thysc men it  
is nedefull and spedefull to Vse the Werkes  
of actyfe lyfe: as besely as they may in the hel



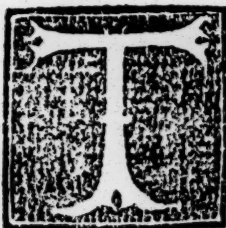
pe of them selfe and of theyr euen cristen / for  
they can nat ellys do.

**¶** Vnto Whom belongeth Contemplatyfe  
lyfe. The fourth. Chaptre.



**D**ontemplatyfe lyfe longeth  
alone to suche men / & Some  
that for the loue of god / for  
sake all open Synnes of the  
World and theyr flesshe / and  
ill besynes / charges / and go  
uernaunce of Worldly goodes / & make them  
selfe poore and naked to the bare nede of the  
bodely kynde / and fle from soueraynte of all  
other men to the seruyce of god / Vnto thys  
men it logeth for to trauayle / & occupye them  
in Wardly for to get thorough the grace of our  
Lorde clennes in herte: and peas in consciens  
by destroyinge of synne / & receyuyng of Ver/  
tues / and so for to come to Contemplacion /  
Which clenes may nat be had Without great  
eccercyse of body and contynuell traueyll of  
the spirite in deuoute prayers feruent desyres  
and ghosly medytacions.

**¶** Vnto Whom belongeth Medled  
lyfe. The fyfthe. Chaptre.



he thirde lyfe that is the med  
led lyfe longeth to men of bo  
dely churche / as to prelates &  
to other curats the Whiche ha  
ue cure and soueraynte ouer  
other men / for to teche and ru  
le them both theyr bodyes & theyr soules pryn  
cipally in fulfyllinge of the dedes of mercy  
bodely and ghostly vnto thysse men it longeth  
sometyme to vse Werkes of mercy in actyfe ly  
fe in helpe and sustenaunce of them selfe & of  
other also / And sometyme for to leue all ma  
ner of besynes outwarde / and to gyue them  
vnto prayers and medytacions / as redyng  
of holy Wryt & to other ghostly occupacions /  
after that they fele them disposed. Also it lon  
geth to some temporall men: Whiche haue so  
ueraynte With moche fauer of Worldly goo  
des / and haue also as it Were lordshyp ouer  
other men / for to gouerne and susteyne them  
as a father hath ouer his children / and a may  
ster ouer his seruauntes / and a lord ouer his  
tenauntes: the Whiche men haue also receyued  
of our Lordes gyfte grace of deuotion: and in  
partye sauoure of ghostly occupacion / vnto  
thesse men also longeth Medled lyfe / that is  
bothe actyfe and contemp<sup>t</sup>atyfe. For if thysse  
men stondynge the charge / and the boode that

they haue taken / Wylt leue Vtterly the besy-  
nes of the Worlde / the Whiche ought saylful-  
ly to be Vsed in fulfyllynge of theyr charge /  
and holly gyue them to contemplatyfe lyfe /  
they do nat Well / for they kepe nat the orde  
of charyte / for charyte as thou knowest Wel  
lyeth bothe in loue of god and of thyne euen  
crysten And therfore it is that he that hath cha-  
ryte to Vse bothe in Werkyng noW to that  
one / and noW to that other for he that for the  
loue of god in contemplacion leuyth the loue  
of his euen crysten: and doth nat to them as he  
ought Whan he is boude therto / he fulfylleth  
nat charyte. Also on the contrary Wyse Who  
so hit so great regarde to Werke of actyfe ly-  
fe and to besynes of the Worlde / that for the  
loue of his euen crysten he leuyth ghoftly occu-  
pacion Vtterly after that god hathe disposed  
hym therto / he fulfylleth nat charyte / this is  
the sayinge of seynt Gregory / for though our  
Lorde for to sterc some to Vse medled lyfe / to  
be Vpon hym self the persone of suche maner  
men / both of prelat; of holy Church / and of  
suche other as are disposed therto / as I haue  
sayde and gaue them ensample by his owne  
Werkyng that they shuld Vse this medled ly-  
fe as he dyd. On a tyme he comoned With me  
and medled With them shewynge his dedes

of mercy for them / & taught the Vncōynge &  
 Vnkno Wen by his prechynge / he Visyted the  
 sycke / and heled them of their diseases / he fed  
 the hungry / & he cōforted the sory / Neuerthe-  
 lesse other tymes he lefte the conuersacion of  
 all Worlde men / and of his Disciples and  
 Went in to deserte vpon the hylles / and con-  
 tynued all nyght in prayers alone as the gos-  
 pel sayth: Therfore this medled lyfe shē Weith  
 our Forde in hym self to ensample of al other  
 that haue taken the charge of this med-  
 led lyfe / that they shuld one tyme gyue them  
 desynes of Worlde thyngs at resonable ne-  
 ce / and to Weith of actyfe lyfe / in prosyfe of  
 theyr euen cristen Whiche they haue cure of / &  
 an other tyme gyue them holly to deuocion &  
 contemplacion / in prayers / & medytacions.

**Howe holy Bysshops Vsed Med-  
 led lyfe. The. vi. Chaptre.**

**T**his lyfe led holy Bysshops / Whiche  
 had cure of mennes soules / and my-  
 nystacion of temporall goodes / for  
 thysc holy men lest nat vtterly the mynystra-  
 cion / and the lokynge / and the dispendynge  
 of Worlde goodes & gaue them holly to con-  
 templacion / as moche grace of c. itemplaci

on as they had / but they leste full ofte theyr  
oWne rest in contemplacion Whan that they  
had Wel leuer haue ben styl / for loue of theyr  
euen cristen / & entermetyd them With World  
ly besynes / in helppynge of theyr subgiettes &  
sothly that Was charyte. For Wysely and dis  
cretely they departed theyr lyuynge in tWo /  
One tyme they fulfylled the loWer parte of  
charyte by Werkes of actyfe lyfe / for they We  
re bounde therto by takynge of theyr prelacye  
And an other tyme they fulfylled the hygher  
partye of charyte in contemplacion of god / &  
of ghostly thyng / by prayers & medytacions:  
and so they had charyte to god & to theyr euen  
cristen / bothe in affection of soule Within / &  
also in sheWyng of bodely dedes Withoute  
other men that Were oonly contemplatyfe / &  
Were fre fro all cures and prelacye / they had  
full charyte to god and to theyr euen cristen /  
but it Was only in affection of theyr soule / &  
nat in outwarde sheWyng / & in hap so mo  
che it Was the more full in Warde / that they  
myght nat / nor it nedyd nat / nor it fyl nat for  
them to sheWe it outwarde / but thys men yt  
Were in prelacye / & other also that Were only  
temporall men had full charyte in affection  
Within / and also in Werkyng & that is p:o  
perly this Medled lyfe / both of actyfe / and of

contemplatyfe lyfe / ⁊ sothly for suche a man  
that is in spirituall soueraynte as prelates / ⁊  
curatys be / or in tēporall soueraynte as Worl  
dly Lordes ⁊ maysters are / I holde this Med  
led lyfe beste / and moost behouesfull to them  
as longe as they are bounden therto : But to  
other that are free and nat bounden to temp o  
rall mynystracion / nor to spirituall I hope  
that contemplatyfe lyfe alone if they myght  
come therto sothfastly Were best / most spedes  
full / most medefull / most fayre / ⁊ most Wor  
thy to them for to vse ⁊ to holde / and nat for  
to leue it Wyllfully for any outwarde Wer  
kyng of actyfe lyfe / but if it Were in great ne  
de / at great releuyng ⁊ comfortyng of other  
men eyther of theyr bodyes or of theyr soules :  
and than if nede aske at the prayer ⁊ instan  
ce of other / or ellys at the byddyng of his so  
uerayn / I hope it be good to shewe it to them  
in ourwarde Werkes of actyfe lyfe / for a ty  
me in helpyng of theyr euen cristen.

**¶** What lyfe mooste accordyd to hym that  
this Was Wrytten to / And that a man  
that hathe souereynite / shall nat gyue  
hym vtterly to deuocion / and leue  
Worlde besynes. The. vii.  
Chaptre.





**D**y this that I haue sayde a  
partye mayst thou vnder/  
stande Whiche is one / and  
Whiche is other / and Whi/  
che accordeth moost to thy  
state of lyuynge / and soth/  
ly as me thynketh this Medled lyfe accordeth  
mooste to the sythen our lord hath ordeyned &  
set the i the state of souereynte ouer other men  
as moche as it is: & hath lent the abundaunce  
of Worldly goodes / for to rule & susseyne spe  
cially all those that are vnder thy gouernaun  
ce / and thy lordshyp after thy myght and con  
nyng / and also therewith thou hast receyued  
grace of the mercy of our lord for to knowe  
thy selfe / and ghostly desyre & sauoure of his  
loue / I hope that this lyfe that is Medled is  
beste and accordeth mooste to the for to tranay  
le in: And therfore departe Wylfully thy lyuyn  
ge / so: Wyt thou Wel if thou leue needful be  
synes of actyfe lyfe and be recheles and take  
no kepe of thy Worldly goodes how they are  
kept & speddyd / nor makest no force of thy sub  
giect / & of thy euen cristen: by cause of desyre &  
Wyl that thou haste only to gyue the to ghost  
ly occupacion / Denying that thou art by that  
excused / if thou do so thou doest nat Wylfully /  
For What are all thy Werks? Worth Whether  
Med.lyfe.

they be bodely or ghostly / but if they be done  
rightfully and reasonably / to the Worshyp of  
god & after his byddyng sothly right nought:  
Than if thou leue that thinge that thou arte  
boudē to by the Way of charite of right & rea-  
son: & Wylt holly gyue the to an other thyng  
Wylfully / as it Were to a more pleasūce of  
god Which thou art nat fully boudē to / thou  
doest nat Worshyp discretly to hym: thou arte  
besy to Worshyp his hed & his face / & to araye  
it fayre and curyously / but thou leuest his bo-  
dy With the feet raggyd and rent / and takest  
no kepe therof / & there thou Worshypest hym  
nat: for it is Vylany and no Worshyp a man  
for to be curiously arayed vpon his hed With  
perlys and precious stones / and all his body  
nakyd and bare as it Were a begger / right so  
ghostly it is noo Worshyp to god to croune  
his hed and leue his body bare / thou shalt vn-  
derstande that our lorde Ihesu criste as man  
is hed of his ghostly body Which is holy chur-  
che / The membres of his body are all cristen  
men / some are armes some are feet / & some ar  
other membres after sondry Werkynges / that  
they vse in theyr lyuynge / than if thou be be-  
sy With al thy myght for to araye his hed that  
is for to Worshyp hym selfe by mynde of his  
passion / and of his other Werkes in his man /

hed by deuocion and medytacion of hym and  
forgettest his feet that are thy children / thy ser  
uauntes / thy tenauntes: and all thyne euen cri  
sten / and lettest them spyll for defaute of ke  
pyng. Vnarayed / Vnkepte / and nat tende to  
as they ought for to be: thou pleasest hym nat  
thou doest no Wo:shipp to hym / thou makest  
the to kysse his mouth by deuocion and ghoft  
ly prayer / but thou treadest vpon his feet and  
despoylest them / in as moche as thou wylte  
nat tende to them for nedygence of thy selfe /  
the Whiche thou hast to ke cure of / thus thyne  
keth me: Neuertheles if thou thyneke that this  
is nat sothe / for it were a fayre offyce to Wor  
shipp the hed of hym / as for to be all day occu  
pyed in medytacion of the manhed / than for  
to go lower to othjer Werkes and make clere  
his feet / as for to be besy bothe in Worde and  
in dede / aboute the helpe of thyne euen cristen  
thyneke nat so / or sothely he wylle thanke the  
more for the myke Wasshyng of his feet Whi  
they are right foule & styne vpon the / than  
for all the prierious payntyng / and arayinge  
that thou can make aboute his hed by myndie  
of his manhed / for it is fayre ynough / and ne  
deth nat to be arayed of that moche / but his  
feet and his other membres that are somtyme  
cuyll arayed and had nede to be looked & hol

pen by the namely sythen thou arte bounden  
thereto: and therfore Wyl he can the more than  
ke if thou Wylt mekely and tenderly loke to  
them / For the more lowe seruyce that thou  
doest to thy Lorde for the loue of hym or to a/  
ny of his membres / Whan neede and right as/  
keth it With a glad meke herte / the more plea/  
sest thou hym / thynke that it Were ynough  
for the to be at the leest degre / & at the lowest  
state sythen it is his Wyl that it be so / for it se/  
meth to me sythen he hath put the in that sta/  
te for to traueyle and serue other men / that it  
is Well done that thou shuldest fulfyll it af/  
ter thy myght / this ensample I say to the nat/  
for thou doest nat thus as I say / For I hope  
that thou doest thus and better / but I Wolde  
that thou shuldest do thus gladly / & nat thyn/  
ke lothe for to leue somtyme ghostly occupa/  
cion and entermet With Worldly besynce in  
Wyse keepynge and spendynge of thy World  
ly goodes in good rulyng of thy seruauntes  
and of thy tenauntes / and in other good Wer/  
kes Werkynge to all thyne euen cristen after  
thy myghte / but that thou shuldest doo bothe  
Werkes in dyuers tymes / and With as good  
Wyll the one as the other if thou myghtest: as  
if thou haddest prayed & ben occupied ghost/  
ly thou shalt after certayn tyme: breke of that

and than shalt thou besyly and gladly occupy the i some bodely occupation to thy euen cristen. And also Whan thou haste ben besye out Warde a Whyle With thy seruantes / or With other men prosytably thou shalt brieue of and tourne agayne to thy prayers and thy deuotions as god Wyl gyue the grace / and so shalt thou put a Day by grace of our Lorde / skouth / ydelnes: and Dayne rest that cometh of thy fleshe vnder coloure of cōtemplacion and letteth the somtyme from medefull / and spedefull occupation in out Warde besynes & thou shalt be euer Well occupied bodely or ghostly / and therfore if thou Wylte do Well thou shalt do ghostly as Iacob dyd bodely.

**T**hō We a man that is Well traueyled and prouyd in dedes of acyfe lyfe / may passe forth and attayne to contemplacion / Whiche is fyr / guryd by Iacobes Wyfes Rachell and Lea.  
The. viii. Chaptre.



**D**ely Wyrt saythe that Iacob / Whan he began to serue his maister Laban / he coueyted Rachel his maisters Doughter to his Wyfe for her fayre hed / and for her he seruyd. vii. yere /

But Whan he thought to haue her to his Wyfe he had first Eya the other doughter in stede of Rachell/ And afterwarde he toke Rachell and so he hadde bothe at the laste/ By Jacob in holy Wryt is vnderstande an ouercomer of synnes/ By thys tWo Wyues are vnderstande as scynt Gregory saythe / tWo lyues in holy Church / Actyfe lyfe / and Contemplatyfe lyfe / Eya is as moche for to saye as traueyllous: and betokeneth Actyfe lyfe / Rachell is as moche to saye as syghte of begynnyng that is god / and betokeneth lyfe Contemplatyfe / Eya bare children. But she Was fore yzed / Rachell Was fayre and louely: but she Was bareyne: Than right as Jacob couetyd Rachell for her fayre hed and yet had her nat Whan he wolde / but firste he toke Eya & afterwarde Rachell / right so euery man traueyllynge sothfastly in compuccion by grace for synnes of the Worlde / and of the flesshe to serue god in clenness of good lyuynge: hath great desyre to haue Rachell / that is for to haue rest in ghostly wetnes in deuocion & contemplacion / for it is so fayre / and so louely / & in hope for to haue that lyfe only he disposyth hym to serue our Lorde With all his myghte: But often Whan he Wende to haue had Rachell / that is reste in deuocion / our Lorde god



suffred hym to be asayd Wel i traueple With  
Eya / that is eyther With temptacions of the  
Woilde / or ellys of the deuylle or of the flesshe  
or ellys With other Worldly besynes bodely:  
or ghostly in helpynge of his euen cristen and  
Whan he is Well trauepled With Eya a nere  
hande ouercome / than our Lorde gyueth hym  
Rachell / that is grace and deuocion and reste  
in consyence / And than hath he both Rachel  
and Eya. So shalt thou do after ensample of  
Jacob take these tWo lyues Actyfe / and Lō  
templatyfe sythen god hathe sent the bothe / a  
Use that one With the other. Wy that one lyfe  
shalt thou brynge forth the frute of many good  
dedes in helpe of thy euen cristen / and that  
is by actyfe lyfe / a by that other thou shalt be  
made fayre / bryght / and clene in the souereyn  
bryghtnes: that is god begynner and ender of  
all that is made / and than shalt thou be soth  
fastly Jacob ouergoer / and ouercomer of all  
synnes / a after this by grace of god thy name  
shall be chaüged as Jacobs name Was / and  
toured in to Istraell / Istraell is as moche for  
to saye as a man serunge god / then if thou be  
furste Jacob / a discretly Wylt Use thyse tWo  
lyues in tyme thou shalt after be Istraell / that  
is Very contemplatyfe / eyther in this lyfe he  
Wyll delpyuer the and make the fre from char

ges/and besynes the Whiche thou art bounde  
to/ or ellys after this lyfe full in the blysse of  
Heuen / Whan thou comest thither. A man  
shall desyre Contemplatyfe / for it is fayre &  
nedefull/ therfore thou shalt euer haue it i thy  
mynde and in thy desyre/ but thou shalt haue  
in vsynge actyfe lyfe/ for it is so nedeful & so  
spedefull/ therfore if thou be put from rest in  
deuocion / Whan thou haddest leuer be stylic  
therat/ cyther by thy children or by thy seruaun  
tes / or by any of thyne euen Cristen/ for theyr  
profyte or ease of theyr hertes skylfully asked  
be nat angrye With them/ nor heuy/ nor dre  
defull/ as though god Wolde be Wroth With  
the/ that thou leuyest hym for any other thyn  
ge/ for it is nat so/ leue of lyghelly thy deuocy  
on/ Whether it be in prayer or medytacion/ &  
goo do thy dede and thy seruyce to thyne euen  
cristen / as lyghelly as our lorde Ihesu criste  
hym selfe hadde the do so/ and suffre mekely  
for his loue Without grutchyng if thou may  
do both Without disease and trobblyng of  
thyne herte / by the cause of medlyng of su  
che besynes.

**T**hat a man shall somtyme haue the more  
deuocion/ Whan he hath be letted by outwar  
de Werkes. The. iij.  
Chaptre.



Or it maye fall somtyme  
that the more troWlyng/  
that thou haste out Warde  
With actyfe Werke: the mo  
re biennynge desyre thou  
shalte haue to god / and the  
more clere syght of ghostly thi: g: by grace of  
our sorde in deuocion Whan thou comest ther  
to / for it faryth thereby as if thou haddest a ly  
tell cole / and thou Woldest make a fyre ther:  
With and make it to bren / thou Woldest first  
ley to styckes and ouerhyle the cole With the  
styck: Neuerthelesse When thou hast abyden  
a Whyle / and after Warde bloWest a lytell /  
anone shal sprynge out a great flam: of fyre  
for the styckes are all tournyd to fyre / Right  
so is ghostly thy Wyll & thy desyre that thou  
hast to god / it is as it Were a lytel cole of fyre  
in thy soule / for it gyueth to the som What of  
lyght / and of ghostly herte / but it is but lytell  
For often it Wapeth colde / and tourneth to  
flesshely reste / and somtyme in to Idelnes /  
therfore it is good that thou put to styck: that  
are good Werkes of actyfe lyfe / and though  
it be so / that these Werkes as it semyth for a  
tyme let thy desyre that it may nat be so clere  
nor so fetuēt as thou Woldest be nat to drede  
full therfore / but abyde and suffre a Whyle /

Med. lyfe.

d.

and so blo We at the fyre / that is firste go and  
do thy Werke / and after go than alone to thy  
prayers and medytacions / and lyfte vp thy  
herte to god / & pray hym of his goodnes that  
he Wyll accept thy Werkes that thou doest to  
his pleasance / and holde the then as nought  
in thyn owne syght but only at his mercy: be  
a knowen mekely thy Wretchednes: and thy  
fraylte / & arecte southfastly thy good dedys  
to hym in as moche as they are good / and in  
as moche as they are bad & nat done dyscret/  
ly With all circumstaunces that are nedefull  
to a good dede / for defaute of discrecyon put  
them to thy selfe / and than for this mekenes  
shall all thy good dedys tourne in to a flame  
of fyre / as styckes is layde vpon a cole / and  
so shall thy good dedys outwarde / nat hynd/  
re thy deuocion but rather make it more: and  
moreouer our lord sayth in holy Writ thus.  
*Ignis in altari meo semper ardebit et sacer/  
dos surgens mane subiciet lingua Ut ignis no  
extinguatur.*) Fyre shall euer brene in myne  
auter: and the preeft rysynge at mornynge shal  
put vnder styckes that it be nat quenchyd / this  
fyre is lone and desyre to god in a soule / the  
Whiche lound for to be nourysshed & kepte by  
layinge to the styckes that it go nat out / these  
styckes are of dyuers maters / some are of one

tre/and some are of an other / A man that is  
letteryd & hath vnderstandyng of holy Wryt  
if he haue this fyre of deuotion in his herte / it  
is good to hym to get hym styckes of holy en/  
samples:and deuoute prayers and nouryshe  
the fyre With them. An other man vnlettred  
may nat so redely haue at his hāde holy Wry  
te nor doctours sayinges . And therfore it ne/  
deth to hym for to doo many good dedes out/  
warde to his euen cristen / & kyndell the fyre  
of loue With them. And so it is good that eue  
ry man in his degre after that he is disposed/  
that he gette hym styckes of one thyng or of  
other / cyther prayers / or medytacions / or re/  
dyng in holy Wryt / or good bodely Werkes  
for to nouryshe the fyre of loue in his soule/  
that it be nat quenched:for the affection of lo  
ue is tendre & lyghtly Wylle vanysshe a Way  
but if it be Well kept /and by good dedys bo/  
dely and ghostly contynually nourysshed.

¶ Nowe than sythen our lorde hathe sent in  
to thyn herte a lytel sparke of this blessyd fy  
re /that is hym sylfe as holy Wryt sayth. (Do  
minus noster ignis consumens est.) ¶ Our  
lorde god is fyre Wastyng / for as bodely fyre  
Wastyth all bodely thyng that may be Wa/  
styd:right so ghostly fyre that is god Wasteth  
all maner of synne /and therfore our lorde is

lykenyd to fyre Wastyng. I pray the nouryshe  
the this fyre: this fyre is nought ellys but loue  
and charyte / this hath he sent in to erthe as he  
sayth in the gospel. (Ignem Veni mittere in  
terram et ad quid nisi ut ardeat.) I am come  
to sende fyre in to the erthe: & Wherto but that  
it shuld bren / that is god hath sent fyre of lo-  
ue and a good desyre also / & a great Wyll for  
to please hym in to mannes soule / and vnto  
this ende that a man shall knowe it / that he  
maye the better kepe / nouryshe / and strength  
it / and therby be sauyd / the more desyre that  
thou hast to hym and for hym / the more is the  
fyre of loue in the / and the lesse that this desyre  
is in the / the lesse is the fyre / the mesure of  
this desyre how moche it is neyther in thy selfe  
ne in none other knowest thou nat: nor no  
man of hym selfe but god onely y<sup>e</sup> gyueth it:  
& therfor dispute nat With thy selfe as though  
thou woldest knowe how moch thy desyre is  
be besy for to desyre as moche as thou mayst /  
but nat for to Wyt the mesure of thy desyre.

**¶** What is desyre to god for hym selfe.  
The. p. Chaire.

**S**aynt Austyne sayth that the lyfe of eue  
ry good cristen man is a contynuell desyre to



god / & that is of great Vertue / for it is a great  
cryinge in the crye of god / the feruētlyer thou  
despreest / the hygher thou cryest: the better thou  
prayeest / the Wyselyer thou thynkest / & What  
is this desyre / sothly no thyngge ellys but a lo/  
thyngge of all this Wo:ld; blysse / of al fleshe  
ly lykynge in thy herte / and a Wonderfull lo  
uynge / With a restfull perynyngge of endles  
blysshe and heuently ioye / this thyngge may be  
called a desyre to god for hym selfe: if thou ha  
ue this desyre as hope sykerly that thou hast /  
I pray the kepe it Well / & nourissh it Wyse  
ly / and Whan thou shalt pray or thynke / ma  
ke this desyre begynnynge and endyng of al  
thy Werke for to encrease it / Loke after none  
other felynge in thy bodely Wyttes / nor seke  
after none other bodely swetnesse / neyther  
swonynge / nor sauoryngge / nor Wonderfull  
lyght / nor aungels syght / ne though our lord  
hym selfe as Vnto thy syghte / Wolde appere  
to the bodely / charge it but a lytel but that al  
thy besynes be that thou myghtest fele soth/  
fastly in thy thought a lothyngge / & a full for  
sakyngge of all maner of synne / & ali maner  
of vnelenes With a ghostly syght of it / how  
foule / howe vgly / and how paynefull it is  
and that thou myghtest haue a myghty desy/  
ryngge to Vertues and mekenes / and to chary

te / & to the blyffe of heuen / this thynketh me  
Were ghostly conforte / and ghostly sWetnes  
in mannes soule / as for to haue clenes in con  
science from Wyckydnes of all Worldly Da  
nyte With stable trouth / meke hope / and full  
desyre to god / hoWe so cuer that it be of other  
confortes / and sWetnes.

**T**hat in clenness of conscience is the very  
conforte and sWetnesse. The. xi. Chaptre.

**M**e thynketh that sWetnesse sy  
ker and sothfast that is felyd  
in clenness of conscience by a  
myghty forsakynge / and a lo  
thynge of all synne / & With  
an inWarde syght / & fetuent desyre of ghost  
ly thynges : and truly all other confortes / &  
sWetnesses of any maner of felynge / but if  
they helpe and lede to this ende : that is to clen  
nes of conscience and ghostly desyre of god /  
at nat syker to rest on. But now askyst thou  
Whether this desyre be loue to god : as vnto  
this I say that this desyre is nat properly lo  
ue / but it is a begynnynge and a tastynge of  
loue : For loue properly is a full coWplynge  
of the louer and louyd togyther / as god and  
a soule in to one. This coWplynge may nat

Be fully had in this lyfe: But oonly in desyre &  
longyng therto as by this ensample if a man  
loue an other man Whiche is absent / he desy/  
reth greatly his presence / right so ghostly as  
longe as We are in this lyfe oure lord is ab/  
sent from vs that We maye neyther se hym /  
nor here hym / nor fele hym as he is / and ther/  
fore We may nat haue the vse of his ful loue  
here in full lykyng / but We may haue a des/  
yre / & also a great yernynge for to be present  
to hym for to se hym in his blysse / & fully for  
to be vnyd to hym in loue / this desyre maye  
We haue of his gyfte in this lyfe / By the Whi/  
che We shall be safe / for it is loue vnto hym  
as it may be had here: thus saynt Paule saith  
**¶** *Scientes qm̄ dum sum⁹ in hoc corpore per  
egetnamur a domino per fidē enim ambula/  
mus et non per specm̄ : audemus autem et bol/  
nam voluntatem habem⁹ magis peregrinari  
a corpore et presentes esse ad deum: et iam con/  
cedim⁹ siue absentes siue presētes placere illi.*  
Saynt Paule sayth that as longe as We ar  
in this body / We are Pylgrymes from oure  
lorde / that is We are absent from heuē in this  
exyle We go by trouthe nat by syghte / that is  
We lyue in trouth nat in bodely felynge / We  
dare and We haue a good Wyll to be absent  
from the body / and be present to god / that is

We for clemmes in consyence and syker trust  
of saluacion/dare desyre partynge from oure  
body by bodely deth/ and to be present to our  
lorde. Neuerthelesse for We may nat yet/ther  
fore We stryue Whether We be absent or pre/  
sent / for to please hym / that is We stryue a/  
gaynst synnes of the Worlde/and lykynge of  
the fleshe by desyre to hym:for to bren in this  
desyre all thyng that letteth vs from hym.  
But yet askyth thou me / maye a man haue  
this desyre in his herte continually/the thyn/  
keth nay:as vnto this I may say as me thyn/  
keth that this desyre maye be had as for Ver/  
tue/ & prosytc of it in herte continually / but  
nat in Werkyng/ nor vsynge as by this en/  
sample if thou Were sycke thou shuldest haue  
as euery man hath a kyndly desyre of bodely  
hele continually in thy herte/What thou dyd/  
dest Whether thou slepe or Wake / but nat e/  
uer a lyke/for if thou slepe or Wake / & thyn/  
kest on some Worldly thyng/ than thou hast  
thy desyre in herte only and nat in Werkyng  
But Whan thou thynkest on thy bodely sye/  
kenes & on thy hele/ than thou hast it in vsyn/  
ge/ right so it is ghostly of desyre to god/ he y<sup>e</sup>  
hath this desyre of the gyfte of god if he slepe  
or ellys thynke nat on god / but on Worldly  
thyngs/ yet he hathe this desyre in herte/ in his

soule tyll that he synne deedly / but anone as  
he thynketh on god / or of cleannes of luyngge  
or of the ioyes of heuen / than Werkeþ his de-  
syre to god / as longe as he kepeth his desyre &  
thought / and his entent to please god: cyther  
in prayer / or in medytacion / or in any other  
good dede of actyfe lyfe / then it is good that  
all our besynes be for to stere this desyre and  
Use it by discrecion: no We in one dede / no We  
in an other after We be disposyd / & haue gra-  
ce therto / this desyre is rote of all thy Werkyng-  
ge / for Wyt thou Well What good dede that  
thou doste for god bodely / or ghostly / it is an  
Vsynge of this desyre / & Whan thou prayest  
or thynkest / doute nat than if thou desyre god  
And therfore Whan thou dost a good dede or  
thynkest on god / doute nat thynkynge in thy  
herte Whether thou desyrest or nat / for thy de-  
de sheweth thy desyre. Some are Vconuyn-  
ge / and Wene that they desyre nat god but if  
they euer be cryunge on god With Wordes of  
theyr mouthe / or ellys in theyr herte as if they  
sayd thus. Lo: be make me safe / or ellys suche  
other: thy se Wordes are good Whether they be  
sayd With the mouth / or fourmed in the herte  
For they stere a mānes herte to desyrynge of  
god / But neuerthelesse Without any suche  
Wordes a clene thought of god: or of any ghost  
Med. lyfe.

ly thyng of Vertues / or of manked of Criste  
or of the ioyes of heuen / or of Vnderstādyng  
of holy Wyt With loue / maye be better than  
suche Wordes / for a clene thought of god / is  
sothfast desyre to hym / and the more ghostly  
that the thought is the more is thy desyre / ther  
fore be thou nat in doute Whan thou prayest;  
or thynkest on god / or ellys Whan thou doste  
other out Warde good dedys to thyn euen cris  
ten Whether thou desyrest hym or nat: for thy  
dedys shew it. Neuerthelesse though it be so  
that all thy good dedys bodely / and ghostly  
are a shewyng of thy desyre to god / yet is dy  
uersyte betwixt ghostly dedys and bodely /  
for dedys of Contemplatyf lyfe are proper  
ly and kyndly / the Workyng of thy desyre /  
but out Warde dedes are nat so. And therefore  
Whan thou prayest / or thynkest on god thy  
desyre to god is more holt: more feruent / more  
ghostly than Whan thou doste other dedys to  
thyn euen cristen for ghostly dedys be proper  
ly loue & nat bodely. Now if thou aske how  
thou shalt kepe this desyre and nouryshe it a  
lytell shal I tell the / nat that thou shalt vse  
the same fourme as I say / but that thou shul  
dest haue therby some Warnyng / and techyn  
ge for to rule the in that occupation / For I  
maye nat / nor I can nat tell the fully What



is beste to the for to Use / but I shall saye the  
somewhat as me thynketh.

Thou shalt dispose the to deuotion.  
The. vii. Chapter.



In nyght; after thy slepe / if  
thou Wylte ryse for to pray  
a serue thy lord / thou shalt  
fele thy selfe firste flesshely  
heuy / and somtyme lusty /  
than shalt thou dispose the  
for to praye / or to thynke some good thought  
for to quyen thy herte to god / and set al thy  
besynes firste for to draue vp thy thought /  
from Worldly Vanities / a from Vayne ima  
gynacion that falleth i to thy mynde y<sup>e</sup> thou  
may fele some deuotion in thy sayinge / or els  
if thou Wylte thynke on ghostly thyngs that  
thou be nat letted With such Vayne thoughtes  
of the Worlde / or of thy flesshe / I shall saye  
somewhat how thou mayst the better do it as  
me thinketh: thou shalt vnderstāde that there  
are many maner of medytacions / but Which  
be best to the can nat I say. But I hope that  
that thought by the Whiche thou feylst mosse  
saueur / and mosse rest in / for the tyme is best  
to the / thou mayste if thou Wylte somtyme

thynke on thy synnes before done / and of thy  
frayltes that thou failest in euery day / & aske  
mercy & forgyuenes for them. Also after this  
thou mayst thynke on the frayltes / the synnes  
and Wretchednes of thyn euen cristen bodely  
and ghostly With pyte & compassion of them  
and aske mercy & forgyuenes for them: as ten  
derly as for thy selfe / & as thou haddest done  
them / and that is a good thought. For I tell  
the forsooth thou mayste make of other mēnes  
synnes a precious oyntement for to heale thyn  
o Wne soule: Whan thou hast mynde on them  
With compassion and sorow for them / this  
oyntement is precious though the sperey of  
it be nat clene: for it is triacle made of Venym  
for to destroye Venym / that is for to say thyn  
o Wne synnes / & other mēnes synnes / if thou  
bete them With sorow of herte / pyte & com-  
passion / they tourne in to tryacle whiche ma-  
keth thy soule hole fro pryde / & enuy / & bryn-  
geth in loue and charyte to thyn euen cristen /  
this thought is good somtyme for to haue.

**T**howe a man shall haue mynde on cristes  
manhed of his passion. The. xiii. Chaptre.

**T**hou mayst haue mynde on the man-  
hed of our Lorde in his byrthe / and in

his passion/or in any of his Werks;/ & fede thy  
 thought With ghostly ymagynacions of it for  
 to stee thy affeccion more to the loue of hym.  
 This thought is good/ and spede full/ name-  
 ly Whan it cometh freely of goddes gyft With  
 deuocion & feruour of the sprite/ ellys a man  
 may nat lightly haue saueur nor deuocion in  
 it / I holde it nat spedefully to a man for to  
 prese than to mooue therupon/ as if he Wolde  
 get it by maystry/ for he shal mooue bryke his  
 hed & his body to/ & he shall neuer be the nere  
 Therefore me thinketh vnto the it is good for  
 to haue in mynde his manhed somtyme/ and  
 if deuocion come Withall & sauoure/ kepe it &  
 folowe it for a tyme/ but leue of soone/ & han-  
 ge nat longe therupon. Also if deuocion come  
 nat With mynde of the passion stryue nat me  
 prese nat to much thereafter/ take easely What  
 Wyll come & go forth to some other thought.

Howe a man shall thynke on Vertues/ &  
 on sayntes. The.iiii. Chaptre.



Ther thoughtes there are that  
 ben more ghoostly / as for to  
 thynke on Vertues: & for to se  
 by syght of vnderstandynge  
 the Vertues of mekenes What it is and howe

a man shulde be meke. And also What is pa-  
cyence / clenness / right Wylles / charyte / chasty-  
te / & sobryte and suche other / and how a man  
shulde gette all thysse Vertues / and by suche  
thoughtes for to haue great desyre / & longyn-  
ge to these Vertues for to haue them / And als  
so for to haue a ghostly syght of the principal  
Vertues as of trouthe / hope & charyte . By the  
syght & desyre of these Vertues a soule shulde  
mowe se & fele moche grace of our lord: With-  
out Which grace a mānes soule is halfe blyn-  
de and Without sauoure or ghostly Wytnes.  
Also for to thynke on sayntes as the Apostles  
Martyrs / Confessours / and holy Virgynes /  
beholde inwardly the holy luyng / the gra-  
ce / and the Vertues that our lord gaue them  
in theyr luyng / and by the mynde of this  
stete thynke o Wne herte / for take ensample of  
them vnto better luyng.

**O**f oure Lady and our Lorde Ihesu  
howe a man shall beholde theyr holy-  
nes. The. xv. Chapter.

**A**lso the mynde of our Lady saynt  
Mary aboue all other sayntes: for to se  
With thy ghostly eye / the abundaunce  
of grace in her holy soule / When she Was be-

re in this World lyuyng that our Lorde gaue  
her alone passing al other saint; / for she Was  
fulfylled With al Vertues Without Bem of  
synne she Wyng full mekenes & perfyte cha-  
ritye / and fully With these beautye and fayre-  
nesse of all other Vertues so holly / that there  
myght no sterynge of Pryde / nor Enuy / nor  
Brothe / nor flesshely lyuyng / nor no maner  
of synne entre in to her herte / nor defoule the  
soule in any parte of it / by the beholdinge of  
the fayreshed of this blessyd soule might a mā-  
nes herte be styred ito ghostly cōforte greatly.  
And moche more than aboue this is the behol-  
dyng of the soule of our Lorde Ihesu / Whi-  
che Was fully Vnyd to the godhed / passyng  
Without cōpatyson / our Lady and all other  
creatures. For in the person of Ihesu are tWo  
kyndes / that is god and man / fully Vnyd to  
gyther / by the Vertue of this blessful Vnyng  
Whiche may nat be tolde ne cōceyued by mā-  
nes Wyt: the soule of Ihesu hath receyued the  
full hed of Wysdom / and lone: & all goodnes  
as the Apostle sayth. (Plenitudo diuinita-  
tis inhabitat in christo corporaliter.) That is  
the godhed Was Vnyd fully to the manhed  
in the soule of Ihesu / & so by the soule dWeld  
lyng in the body / the mynde of the manhed  
of our Lorde Was illumyned aboue all other

that be / or shall be / and Upon this Wyse for  
to beholde the Vertue / and the ouerpassynge  
grace of the soule of Ihesu / shall be right co/-  
fortable to mannes soule.

**O**f beholdynge of the myghte / the Wys/-  
dom: the goodnes and the mercy of god in his  
creatures. The. p. vi. Chapter.



he mynde of the myght / the Wys/-  
dom / and goodnes of our Lorde  
in all his creatures / for as moche  
as we maye nat se god fully in  
hym selfe here lyuynge / therefore  
we shulde beholde loue / drede / and Bondre /  
his myght / his Wysdom / and his goodnes in  
his Werkes / and in his creatures. Also for to  
thynke on the mercy of our lorde that he hath  
shewyd to me / & to the / and to al synfull crea-  
tures that haue ben combred in synne / & spar-  
ryd so longe in the deuylles pryson / how our  
Lorde pacyently suffred vs tye in our synne  
and toke no vengeance on vs as he myght  
haue done right wysly / and put vs in to hell  
if his loue had nat letted hym / but for loue he  
sparyd vs. He had pyte on vs & sent his gra-  
ce in to our hertes / & called vs out of synne: &  
by his grace hath tourned our Wyl holly vñ



to hym. And for to haue hym and for his loue  
 ue to forsake all maner of synne / the mynde  
 of his mercy & of his goodnes With other cir-  
 cumstaunces / mo than I can or may reherse  
 no w/brynge in to a soule great truste of our  
 lord & ful hope of saluacion / & kyndelcth the  
 desyre of loue myghtely to the ioyes of heuen.

**T**hose the mynde of the Wretchednes & of  
 the perylls of this World make a soule to de-  
 syre the blysse of heuen. The. xvii. Chaptre.



**D**r to thynke on the Wret-  
 chednes / myscheues / & pe-  
 rylls bodely / and ghostly  
 that fall in this lyfe / & af-  
 ter for to thynke on the ioy-  
 es of heuen / he be moche  
 blysse there is & iore / for there is neyther fyue  
 ne sorowe / ne passion / nor payne / hunger / ne  
 thyrste / sore ne sykkenes / doute / nor drede / sha-  
 me / nor shenshypp / nor default of myght / lac-  
 kyng of lyght // nor Wantynge of loue / but  
 there is fouerayne fayresh / lyghnes / stren-  
 gthe / helpe / lykynge / euerlastynge Wyfdom /  
 loue peas / Worshyp sykernes / rest ioy & blyss  
 se ynough euer Without ende / the more that  
 thou thynkest and felyst the Wretchednes of

Med. lyfe.

f.

this lyfe / the more feruently shalt thou desyre  
the ioy and the rest of the blysse of heuen: Ma  
ny men are Couetous of Worldly Worshyp  
pes and earthly ryches / no W dremynge / no W  
Wakynge / so We and by What meanes they  
myght come therto / and therefore they forgette  
the mynde of them selfe / & the paynes of hell /  
& the ioyes of heuen / sothly they are nat Wyse  
they are lyke to chyldeyn that ren after butter  
flyes / for they loke nat to theyr fete / they fall  
somytyme soone doWne & breke theyr legges /  
What is all the pompe & the Worshyp of this  
World in ryches or in iolyte / but a butterfye  
sothly no thyng eekys / and yet moche lesse /  
therefore I praye the be thou Couetous of the  
ioyes of heuen / and thou shalt haue Worshyp  
and ryches that euer shall laste / for at the last  
ende / Whan Worldly couetous men brynge  
no good in theyr hādes / for al theyr Worshyp  
pes / and all theyr rychesces are tourned in to  
nought saue sorowe and payne / Than shall  
Worldly men that forsake truly all Dayne  
Worshyppes & rychesces of this Worlde / or el  
lys if they haue rychesse / & Worshyppes they  
set nought by them / nor they set nat theyr lo  
ue nor lykynge in them / but lyue euer in drede  
and in mekenes / & in hope / & somtyme in so  
roWe and abyde the mercy of god pacyently

they shal than haue fully that they here concey-  
ted / for they shall be crownded as kyniges and  
stepe vp With our lord Ihesu in to the blyffe  
of heuen. Also there be many other medytaci-  
ons mo than I can say / Whiche that god put  
teach ito a mānes mynde for to stee the affecci-  
on / & the reason of mānes soule to lothe vany-  
tes of this Worlde / & for to desyre the ioyes of  
heuen. These Wordes I saye nat to the as I  
had fully shewed the maner of medytacions  
as they are Brought in a mannes soule / but  
I touche them to the a lytell that thou myght  
test by this haue more vnderstandynge.

**Howe** a man shall do Whan he feleth no  
sauoure nor conforte in his medytacions.

The. viii.

Chapter.



**Et** neuerthelesse me thynketh  
it is good to the y<sup>e</sup> Whan thou  
dysposest the to thynke on god  
as I haue before sayde / or on  
other Wyse / & perauenture thou  
felest no sauour nor deuocion in thy thynkyng  
ge but onely a naked mynde & a weake Wyse /  
that thou woldest fayne thynke on god / but  
thou can nat / thā I hope it is good to the that  
thou stryue nat to moche With thy selfe / For

thou myghtest so lightly fall in to more deere  
 kesnes / but if thou Were more slye in thy Wer  
 kynge / & therfore I holde it then moste syker  
 Vnto the for to say thy Pater noster / and thy  
 Aue maria / or ellys thy Matens / or els for to  
 rede vpon thy Psalter: for that is euermore a  
 syker standarde that Wyll nat fayle / Who so  
 may cleue therto he shall nat erre / and if thou  
 mayste by thy prayer get deuotion / loke than  
 if this deuotion be oonly in affection / that is  
 to say in great desyre to god With ghostly de  
 lyte / holde forth than thy sayunge & breke nat  
 lightly of / for often it falleth that prayunge  
 With the mouth / gettyth & keepyth deuotion: &  
 if a mā cease of sayunge / deuotion Vanyssheth  
 aWaye. Neuerthelesse if deuotion of prayer  
 bryng in to thy herte a deuoute thought of the  
 manhed of our lord: or of any of the other be  
 foresayd: & this thought shuld be letted by thy  
 sayunge / than mayst thou cease of thy sayng: &  
 occupy the W<sup>t</sup> meditacion tyl it passe aWaye.



Wherof a mannedeth to  
 be Ware in meditacion.  
 The. xij. Chapter.  
 Of certayne thynges the  
 behoueth to be Ware in thy  
 meditacions /ome shall I tell the. One is

Whā thou hast had a ghosly thought or yma-  
gynacion of the manhed of our lordē / or of su-  
che bodely thyngs / & thy soule hath ben cōfor-  
ted & fed therewith / & it passeth a waye by the  
selfe / be nat to besy to holde it styll With ma-  
stry / for it is than tourned to payne & to byr-  
terneffe. Also if it passe nat a way / but dwel-  
lye in thy mynde Without any trauayle of  
thy selfe / & thou for conforte of it Wyl nat le-  
ue it: & therfore it reuyth the of thy slepe in ny-  
ghtes / or ellys in dayes fro other good dedys:  
or ellys for great feruour of thy body / thy bod-  
y or thy hedde fallith in to great febylnesse /  
than shalt thou Wylfully breke of Whan tye  
me cometh / somtyme Whan thou hast moste  
deuocion & Were lothest for to leue it: as Whā  
it passeth resonable tyme / or ellys it tourneth  
to disease of thyn euen cristen. But if thou do  
so thou doste nat Well as me thynketh / nor  
Wylfuly neyther / a Worldly man or Woman  
that felvth nat perquenture deuocion & Wyl-  
le a yere / if he fede by the grace of our lord Ihesu  
great cōpuncion for his synes / or ellys haue  
mynde on the passion of our lordē / if he Were  
put from his slepe / & his rest a nyght or tWo /  
or thre Vntyl his hed werke / it is no force / for  
it cometh to them but seldom. But to the or to  
an other man y<sup>e</sup> hath the maner of Werkyng

in custome as it Were eche other dry / it is spe/  
de ful for to haue disceccion in your Werkyng  
& nat fully to fall werto / for to solo We it as  
moche as Wyl come / & I holde that it is good  
to the to vse this maner i what deuocion that  
thou be / that thou hige nat to loge ther vpon  
eyther to put the fro thy mete or from thy slepe  
in tyme / or for to disceise any other man vns  
saylfully / the Wyse man sayth thus. Omnia  
tempus habent) All thyng haue tyme. No o/  
ther thyng that the deuocion to be Ware of is  
this / Whan thy thought hath ben occupyed in  
ymagynacion of the myshed of our lorde / or  
in any suche other / and after this thou arte be  
syde With all the desyre of thy herte / for to seeke  
knowyng or felyng more ghostly of the god  
hed / prese nat to moche theron / nor suffre nat  
thy desyre / nor thy herte tary to longe therein /  
as if thou Were a byrdige after some quaynte  
sterynge / or Wonderfull felynge other than  
thou haste had before tyme / thou shalt nat do  
so / it is ynough to the & to me for to haue a de  
syre / and a longyng to our lorde / & if he Wyl  
of his grace freely ouer this desyre sende We of  
his ghostly lyghte / & open our ghostly eye for  
to knowe more of hym than We haue had be  
fore by comon trauayle thynke We hym ther/  
of / & if he Wyl nat for We are nat yet meke



ynough / or elles We are nat disposed by clea-  
nes of luyng in outhet sydes to receyue that  
grace. thi shall We mekely know our owne  
Wretchednesse / and holde vs payde With de-  
syre thit We haue to hym / & With other comō  
thoughtes that maye lyghtly fall vnder our  
ymagynacion / as of our owne synnes / or cri-  
stes Passion or such other: or elles With pray-  
ers of the psalter or some other / and loue hym  
With all our herte that he Wyl gyue vs any  
parte of his grace. And if thou do othet Wyse  
thou mayst lyghtly be begyled by thy spyryte  
of errour for thy presumpcion / for it is great fos-  
ly a man by his owne Wytte / for to prese so  
moche in to knowyng of ghostly thyngs: but  
if he felyd plenty of grace: For the Wyse man  
sayth. *Scrutator maiestatis opprimeſ a glo-  
ria.* That is to say a ransaker of the myght &  
of god and his mageste / Without great clea-  
nes & mekenes shal be ouerlayde & oppresyd  
in hym self / & therfore the Wyse man sayth in  
an othet place on this Wyse. *(Alciora te ne  
quesieris / et forciora te ne scrutatus fueris.)*  
That is to saye hyghe thyngs / that are aboue  
thy Wyt & thy reason seke nat / & great thyng-  
ges that are aboue thy myghte ransake nat.  
By these Wordes the Wyse man forbedeth nat  
vtterly for to seke & ransake ghostly and he-

uenly thyng: but he forbiddeth vs that as longe  
as we are flesshely and nat elensyd from  
vayne loue of the Worlde/ that we take nat  
vpon vs by our owne trauayle/ nor by our  
owne wyte for to ransake or to fele ghoostly  
thynges/ ne though we fele ghoostly thynges  
and great seruour of the loue of god/ so moch  
that we set at nought all erthly thyngs/ & we  
thynketh that we wolde for goddes loue for  
sake all the ioyes / and all the welthe of this  
Worlde/ yet are we nat anone able and redy  
for to seke and beholde ghoostly thynges/ that  
are aboue vs vnto our soule be made so tyll:  
and tyll it be made sadde/ & stable in vertues  
by processe of tyme / & encreasynge of grace/  
for as saynt Gregory sayth: no man sodaynly  
is made souerayne in grace/ but from lytel  
he begynneth/ and by processe wappeth vnto  
he be parfyt. Amen.

¶ Finis.

¶ Thus endeth this lytell treatyse intytuled  
the Medled lyfe compyled by Walter Hyll  
ton/ at the instaunce of a deuoute man of  
temporall estate. Imprynted by me  
Robert Wyre / dWellynge at the  
Sygne of saynt Iohn Euāgels  
lyst in saynt Martyns paryshe  
shere, besyde Charynge crosse.

